

4000 H O L E S



*The Fanzine of
Blackburn Rovers
Supporters*

SEPTEMBER, 1989



*"A Northern Horde of
uncouth Garb and
Strange Oaths"*

Issue no. 1
50p

4,000 HOLES



Welcome to this, the first edition of "4,000 HOLES". So what is it, you ask? Well if your'e ready, I'll begin - OK.

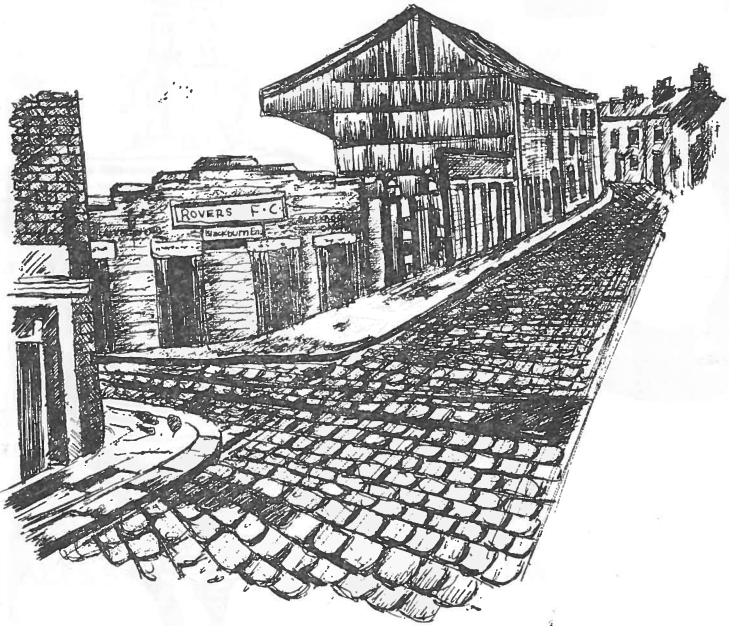
This magazine (if you can call it that) is first and foremost a lighthearted look at football in general as seen from the point of view of a small number of fans who happen to support Blackburn Rovers. When I say football, I don't just mean the purist view of 22 players kicking the ball, but everything that goes with it: a momentary thought during a match ("that's a lovely pigeon, what on earth is it up to?") Blackburn Enders are well aware of this thought by the bye, the swaying on the End, often seen as enthusiastic support, is really just folk dodging pigeon missiles.

Anyhow, I've gone off track; as you can see, football does encompass a lot of things, often not printed or even discussed by fans, but its there anyhow. So already, you can see that this mag will cover all sorts, but it will also try to cover important issues in our game like I.D. cards, crowd safety, etc. When I said earlier that its only the view of a few fans that's because you have only just read this or are starting to read it and haven't yet submitted your ideas to it, but you are encouraged to do so at the address on the back page.

Now that we've discussed what the "Fanzine" is, lets get a few things straight; let's discuss what this mag is not.

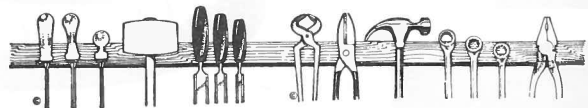
Firstly, this mag does not represent the views of anyone connected with Blackburn Rovers Football Club, so if you don't like it, complain to us (we are sympathetic!) - Margaret Thatcher is our Agony Aunt.

Secondly, this mag is not intended to be a "We hate Burnley" mag, though the odd joke won't go amiss as I guess they'll have a Fanzine of their own soon and I expect Rovers will take some stick in it too. If you really hate Burnley, you'd probably need to take a good look at yourself, give football a miss for a few years and come back when you can have a good laugh at them but still shake their hands and yes, even buy them a pint. Once you've done that, count yourself as a true football fan and human being and maybe Maggie will lift this silly card idea. I could write her a letter and ask.



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WE CAME, WE SAW, WE CRUMBLLED

Here we go . . . again, at the start of another season in the Second Division. Normally at this time of the year, our thoughts turn towards the team's prospects for the coming season. What thrills, & spills, joys & heartaches will unfold during the next eight months or so? How will our new signings perform? Will the new pitch survive the Colin Hendry sliding tackle? Will the pies be hard enough to stand on for a better view? These and other imponderables usually occupy our minds at this time. But to all except the thickest skinned True Blue, expectations of future glories will undoubtedly be tempered by the trauma of last season's Play-Off final.


I, like most, had made the arduous trek down to Surrey with the expectation of joining the celebration of a return to the top flight. We had paid enough dues (though obviously not to Mr. Courtenay) during previous seasons: I recalled our despair at Eastville in 1981, when Swansea went up instead of us on goal average, and at home to Wolves five years later. On both occasions, though comfortable winners on the day, we had to rely on rival teams failing which, of course, they did not. This time, it was to be entirely in our own hands, and with the cushion of a two-goal lead from the first leg, it seemed Palace's optimism was born more out of blind faith than reasoned logic. How wrong we were.

After the final, final whistle, I stood there dumbfounded while all around the ground, Palace fans cavorted to the tune of The Dave Clark Five's "Glad All Over" which blared from the Tannoy.

When I eventually turned away from the revellery, our poxy little wedge of terrace was almost deserted but for a sprinkling of inconsolable Rovers fans sat, head in hands, unashamedly weeping.

How cruel this game we love can be: And especially so, it would seem to Blackburn Rovers supporters. "Long suffering" we most certainly are. And after this Waterloo, the knockers will be all the more exaltant.

How many times have we heard the familiar: "They don't WANT to go up!" and the old favourite "They're better off in the Second Division". Granada's resident Gypsy Rose Lee, Bob Greaves, previewing the weekends fixtures on a Friday night was once heard to say "On now to Blackburn Rovers and their annual battle to avoid promotion . . ."

 Selhurst Park, 3rd June, 1989: It will never be forgotten by any supporter who was there, it will become another hard-luck story to add to many others. Another walk up the aisle as bridesmaid; we so nearly spoke the vows but in the end we left groping for the bouquet.

Fate can surely never again conspire so viciously against these battle-weary defenders of the faith.

SH.

DID THEY REALLY SAY THAT?

1—"THIS TEAM MUST BE KEPT TOGETHER"

Outgoing manager, Ken Furphy, commenting on the Rovers Team weeks before returning to take Terry Garbett, David Bradford and Tony Field to Sheffield United. (December 1973).

2—"FORTY YEARS OF PEACE IN EUROPE AND KEELEY HAS STARTED ANOTHER WAR"

John Motson - 1985 commenting on Rovers v Portsmouth match.

3—"WE WERE HOPING TO CATCH LIVERPOOL ON AN OFF DAY, UNFORTUNATELY THEY CAUGHT US ON ONE"

Bob Saxton, 8th January 1983, after Rovers had been beaten 2-1 at home by Liverpool in the third round of the F.A. Cup.

4—"MY FUTURE IS WITH BLACKBURN ROVERS"

Jim Smith - 16 weeks before becoming Manager of Birmingham City (December 1977).

5—"PSST, WANNA TICKET FOR THE FINAL?"

Derek Dougan to a Wednesday defender after scoring what proved to be the winning goal in the 1960 F.A. Cup semi-final.

6—"DAVID BRADFORD COULD BE THE FIRST MILLION POUND FOOTBALLER"

Ken Furphy - circa 1971.

7—"PENALTY I!"

George Courtenay, Selhurst Park - 3rd June, 1989.

8—"WHAT THE WAS THAT FOR?"

Almost everybody else (except Brian Moore).

9—"WE'LL BE IN THE FIRST DIVISION LONG AFTER CRYSTAL PALACE ARE DEAD & BURRIED"

Bob Lord - circa 1971.

10—"I JUMPED SO HIGH I THOUGHT I WOULD NEED A PARACHUTE"

Ronnie Hildersley after scoring with his head vs Watford (17th December 1988).

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QUIZ

- 1—Who was the first Rovers player to touch the ball in the 1987 Full Members Cup Final ?
- 2—In 1936, a Rovers team, already relegated, sealed a similar fate for Aston Villa by winning the last game of the season at Villa Park. What did the crowd sing ?
- 3—What does Tommy Briggs really have in common with Andy Kennedy ?
- 4—What does Don Mackay have in common with French existentialist Albert Camus ?
- 5—a) What team lost the F.A. Cup Finals of 1947 and 1962 ?
b) If you had been there, would you have cried ?
- 6—Who was the first player to be shown the red card in the English Football League ?
- 7—Who is the only European Footballer of the Year to turn out in a Blackburn Rovers strip ?

Answers on page 12

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TO EVERYTHING THERE IS A FOOTY SEASON

(Remember the other 90 hours?)

Consolation is hard to find amidst the chagrin of Selhurst but there were 59 other League and Cup matches in what ultimately must be viewed as a thrilling season. As in previous campaigns, Rovers managed to combine the brilliant with the banal, the inspired with the insipid. Who could forget the excitement of the victory over Palace last October by the odd goal in nine! Or the similarly fluctuating fortunes of the 4-3 win over Stoke? While such matches make managers cringe, for the fan, such drama is all too rare in the modern game.

But why did we struggle so much against the lower teams? OK, so even The Rovers couldn't mess it up against Walsall, the worst team in the division, though Scott Sellers did his bit to help them back into a match which seemed to have been sewn up by two Andy Kennedy goals. But in April Birmingham City, already relegated, beat us quite convincingly, and the Shrews, also bound ultimately for Division Three, took four points from us.

The best team performances came in the home matches against Leeds United and Manchester City, though the exhilaration of a 4-0 trouncing of City was short lived as the shocking news from Hillsborough began to filter through.

The farce of the year was surely the home game against Sunderland when two and a half hours of torrential rain turned the pitch into a paddy-field. Referee David Philips compounded his initial folly of starting the match by awarding three absurd penalties, only one of which was converted - that from a miskick by Marco Gabbiadini. Rovers came back from two goals down and scored a bizarre equalizer when full-back Frank Gray sliced an intended clearance over the flailing arms of his own keeper. Entertainment of sorts, but a precarious lottery for any team with promotion aspirations.

Filbert Street on New Year's Eve was the season's low-point. Routed by the enigmatic Leicester City; to this observer, it was clear that the team, as it stood, was not going to be good enough to go up. Finnigan and Atkins were not after all in the same class as Barker and Price, their predecessors, and even with the previous year's team, Rovers had failed to get beyond the first stage of the Play-Offs. What chance then had an inferior team? Back in Blackburn for the traditional merry-making, I proceeded to bore my friends to distraction with this dire expression of Rovers' prospects, and on a night usually reserved for mirth and frivolity, I let this grim realization get the better of me.

Wouldn't you know it! Three days later, out of trepidation sprang hope eternal with a performance of character (and no little comedy) in beating Stoke City 4-3.

There were, of course, to be further let-downs, most notably an ingominous exit from the F.A. Cup at the hands of Brentford who, let it be said, fully deserved their 2-0 victory, and in Gary Blissett, had the game's outstanding player. Disappointment at our failure to make the Quarter Finals of the competition for which we are famous was mitigated by good form in the League and it seemed we were back on the rails after wins over Oxford and Barnsley had asserted us in 3rd place in the division. But in early March, we suffered successive defeats by Brighton, Plymouth and West Brom. Plymouth manager, Ken Brown, had liked the look of David Byrne, on loan to Rovers from Millwall, for within four days of playing against them in the 2-1 defeat, the right flanker found himself an Argyle player!

Players inevitably come and go from season to season but the departure of Simon Barker to QPR a year ago left any successor with a hard act to follow. Mac soon disengaged Tony Finnigan, then Ronnie Hildersley, eventually opting for a beefing up job in midfield using John Millar alongside Nicky Reid. Though a less subtle approach, it was undoubtedly more effective, particularly so against some of the more physical sides.

Mark Atkins looked decidedly insecure when the season began. I vividly recall the first home League match: Oldham's Tommy Wright skipped past his rumbustious challenges with contemptuous ease and towards the end of a traumatic first half for the young full back, Atkins deftly chipped a ball over Terry Gennoe who could only watch in admiration as the ball rebounded down from the cross-bar for David Mail to dive full length and head clear from off the line. An inauspicious start, to say the least, but by the end of the season, one in which Atkins played every match, the £45,000 fee paid to Scunthorpe at the insistence of a tribunal, seemed to be an under-estimation of his potential. In only one season of Second Division football, he has matured beyond his twenty-one years and his seven goals prove he is at least as effective an attacker as his predecessor, Chris Price.

A seven match unbeaten run culminating in the demolition job of City, lifted us to within sight of the Play-Offs and an outside chance of reeling in a floundering Manchester City for an automatic promotion spot. Eventually we stumbled into the Play-Offs accepting the inherent anguish and suspense but confident in the knowledge that during the course of the season, we had not lost to any of the three other protagonists. Moreover, we had been there before. In the end of course, it all came to nought - Three - Nought, and a summer of bitter memories and "if only's".

So when the Riverside Stand again reverberates with that familiar blend of praise & damnation, I shall be there having banished all thoughts of past failures to concentrate on exciting new ones.

SH.

WHAT'S IN A NAME ?

There are now numerous Fanzines around all with different names. Here's just a few with our thoughts:

CLUB:	NAME:	COMMENT:
AYR UNITED	4-1	An average score perhaps?
TORQUAY UNITED	MISSION IMPOSSIBLE	Apt.
DARLINGTON	MISSION TERMINATED	Did they choose this after religation?
AIRDRIE	ONLY THE LONELY	Just look up their attendances.
BIRMINGHAM CITY	TIRED & WEARY	I'm sure they are - their team was.
BOLTON WANDERERS	THE NORMID NOMAD	Somebody please explain, possibly on our letters page.
BRIGHTON	AND SMITH MUST SCORE	Famous F.A. Cup Commentry (He didn't).
GILLINGHAM	BRIAN MOORE'S HEAD	Vice President
GRIMSBY	SING WHEN WE'RE FISHING	Nothing else would do (Happy Haddocks perhaps).
HULL	HULL, HELL & HAPPINESS	Sums up football.
IPSWICH	DRIBBLE	What's their mag like?
NORTHAMPTON	WHAT A LOAD OF COBBLERS	Nuf said.
NOTTS. FOREST	THE ALMIGHTY BRIAN	The Almighty Brain is what I prefer.
PORT VALE	THE MEMOIRS OF SETH BOTTOMLEY	Needs explaining if anyone knows.
READING	ELM PARK DISEASE	Not for long if planning gets the go ahead.
ST. MIRREN	HERE'S A STORE WHERE THE CREATURES MEET	Never been but I believe them.
SOUTHAMPTON	THE UGLY INSIDE	Ever been to their ground?

What of our name—

4,000 HOLES, A NORTHERN HOARD OF UNCOUTH GARB AND STRANGE OATHS.
— Try Beatles song and Pall Mall Gazette.

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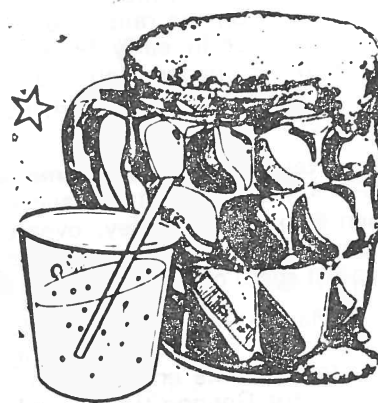
(ITS THE FIRST PUB OFF THE FERRY)

or THE ROVERS RETURN,

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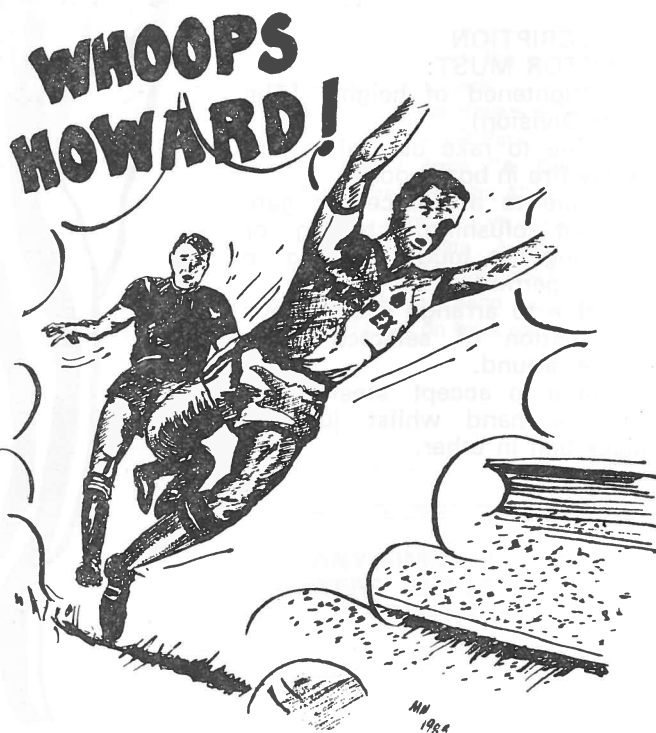
SELHURST SELL-OUT

NIGHTMARES & NURSERY RHYMES

Georgie Porgie, Porky Pie
Gave a 'pen' but didn't know why,
The Courtenay name was never higher
Since Uncle Tom played Billy Liar.

Hey diddle-diddle,
The man in the middle,
The crowd played all the positions,
From the back to the wing,
And to cover everything
They even took George's decisions

Little Jack Horner
Was stuck in the corner,
He'd have seen just as much from the Orkneys
When Howard was chopped,
And play wasn't stopped,
Jack's view was better than Courtenay's.



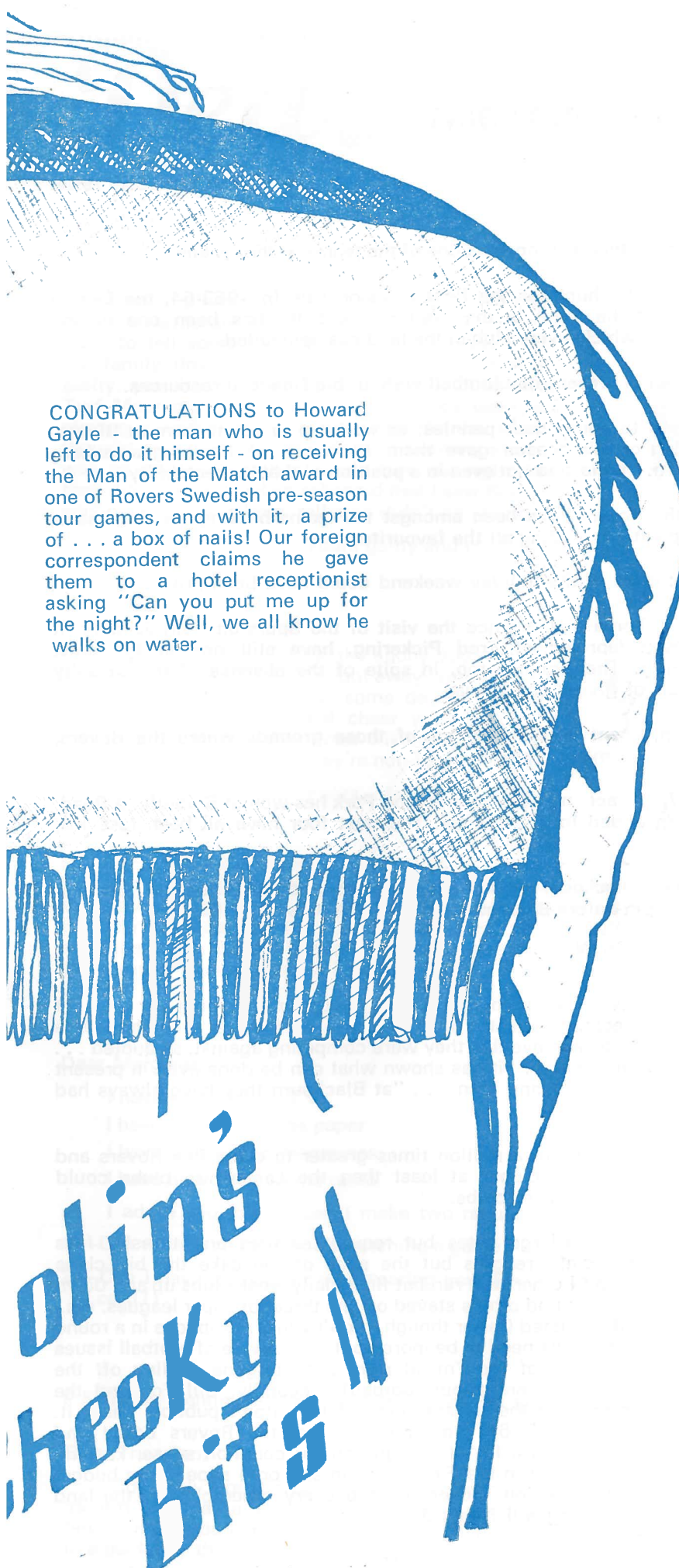
At Elland Road, Leeds' £600,000 signing Mel Sterland, having been teased by the crafty Scott Sellers through the first half, undertook a little teasing himself: "How much are you on then?" the Carthorse turned Nag enquired of Rovers' second half sub, Andy Kennedy. After the game, Mel joined the players in the bar: "If you're on so much, Mel, how about getting 'em in for th' lads?" suggested the pint-sized Simon Garner. Mel, it would seem suffered a sudden attack of modesty and declined the invitation.

A little local knowledge is a dangerous thing! We should like to thank the Football League for at least trying to give us a Christmas derby for once - But Swindon is NOT in Wilpshire.

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- 2—Be able to rake out ashes and re-lay fire in boardroom.
- 3—Be able to announce the gate without blushing, choking or laughing out loud (laughing up sleeve permitted).
- 4—Be able to arrange spontaneous combustion of selected areas of the ground.
- 5—Be able to accept 'steel stock' in one hand whilst juggling black ball in other.



CONGRATULATIONS to Howard Gayle - the man who is usually left to do it himself - on receiving the Man of the Match award in one of Rovers Swedish pre-season tour games, and with it, a prize of . . . a box of nails! Our foreign correspondent claims he gave them to a hotel receptionist asking "Can you put me up for the night?" Well, we all know he walks on water.

olin's
cheeky
Bits

THE DAY THE PAST WAS FINALLY BURIED

(THE ROVERS' REBIRTH)

At three o'clock the gates were closed, the teams were set to play,
When all at once a ghostly voice said "Stop and hear me pray,
I am the ghost of Ewood's past, the spirit of Rovers fame,
So listen hard before I leave, and the future takes my name,
Keep in your hearts, you Rovers' men, the fun you had as boys,
Delight us with your speed and skill, take pride in style and poise,
Pander not to temperament, don't bow to 'Superstars',
Forego the booze, the fags, the bets, take pride in who you are,
Think hard instead about the fact that you are Blackburn's pride,
Take joy in entertaining, be loyal to your side,
Remember, too, you blue and whites, the future's up to you,
Keep playing football, as you can, the dreams will all come true,
So go ahead lads, do us proud; keep faith within your heart,
And all you Blackburn Rovers' fans — you too, must play your part,
We've got the ground, we've got the team, the future's looming strong,
We'll make the First Division soon, where Blackburn do belong".
The voice died down, the game began, the past had left its mark,
And as he left, the Rovers scored, and the future found Ewood Park.

— An extract from "A Quiet Hour in Lancashire" by John Allen.

From the Rovers vs. Palace match programme of 19th August, 1978. We want to find the worst poem ever written about our team. Send your offering to "FTH" (address on back page).

ANY SIMILARITY TO ANY
PLAYERS' ANATOMY IS PURELY
INTENTIONAL.

TALKING POINT

30th MARCH, 1964.

Blackburn Rovers come to Blackpool this afternoon as one of the teams of the season.

Whatever the fate of the Rovers in the hunt for the First Division title in 1963-64, the Ewood Park team's challenge to the monopoly of the clubs in the "millionaire belt" has been one of the highlights of this football year and one which every club in the land has applauded.

It has shown what can be done even in present-day football without big financial resources.

At Blackburn they have always had to count their pennies, as we have to count them at Bloomfield Road. Few people at the beginning of this season gave them a chance of finishing anywhere except somewhere near the middle of the table and not even in a position of that respectability.

Yet from the first month or two the Rovers have been amongst the teams bidding for the Championship and have even held the top position, leading all the favourites.

No greater attraction for the last match of the holiday weekend could have been provided.

For Blackpool, who have not lost a home match since the visit of the Spurs on 18th January, it will be a big challenge. The Rovers, even deprived of Fred Pickering, have still one of the most penetrative forward lines in the country. The defence too, in spite of the absence of the casualty list of Keith Newton, is not in the habit of giving goals away.

Yet Bloomfield Road has never in recent times been one of those grounds where the Rovers, whatever their position in the League, have made a profit.

Since their promotion in 1956-57, in fact, no team from Ewood Park has won at Bloomfield Road. The first match after the Rovers' return ended in a 1-1 draw. The next four have all been lost 1-0, 2-0, 2-1 and last season 4-1.

So on the horses-for-courses theory, Blackpool are not necessarily second favourites. But, however it should end, it should be a match fit to put before Blackpool's holiday visitors.

This article from the Blackpool vs Rovers programme of 1964 caught my eye, not for the fact that, just two years before Rovers were relegated from the First Division for the last time they were challenging for the First Division title, but to achieve this they were competing against, as quoted . . . clubs from the "millionaire belt" - it goes on to say . . . it has shown what can be done even in present day football (1964) without big financial resources and then . . . "at Blackburn they have always had to count their pennies" (God don't we know).

It occurred to me that the gulf now must seem a million times greater to clubs like Rovers and Blackpool (not to mention all the other Lancashire clubs) at least then the Lancashire clubs could match to a few thousand the gates of the millionaire clubs.

These days the millionaire clubs still get the large gates but request salaries and transfer fees which not only reflect their gates and commercial strengths but the slice of the cake the big clubs demand from TV., what of the smaller clubs, and other well run but financially weak clubs up and down the country, it's not long ago the likes of Bill Fox and others staved off the threat of super leagues, etc., at least Foxy's got the Presidents job (I really trusted Carter though, didn't you?). I suppose in a round about way I'm trying to say two things, firstly the fans need to be more politically aware of football issues (like Fox is), unfortunately this means being aware of the I'm all right Jack brigade, selling off the League for glory and greed (Liverpool we're so sincere about football). Secondly, Bill Fox and the board in general take a lot of stick from the fans on the terrace, even if they don't publicly chant it, though referring back to the text from the Blackpool '64 programme, I feel the Rovers board and recent managers (yes Bobby too), deserve a hell of a lot of recognition for common sense, keeping the Club afloat, striving for promotion and a return to the First Division and on a shoe string budget that now 25 years later although not the First Division, Rovers a club every other club in the land has applauded (I said club and not fans - how long will it last?).

Dear Margaret

Dear Margaret,

Please, please help me, since May I have been living a desperate life, I now feel I can't go on, I need to tell someone, I feel I have let myself and my family down and my friends down. I feel so guilty, yes, it all comes back too easily, I went to Turf Moor and saw a match that Rovers were not playing in and to make things worse Burnley won. I thought that friends would want to hear my story, I was so convinced things would turn out right, but they didn't, now I feel so ashamed that I saw Burnley win, please, please help, tell me I didn't do wrong.

Yours guilty and confused.

Dear guilty and confused,

You poor child, I know the agony you must be suffering, let me tell you straight away, your motives were true, don't feel guilty, some day (soon) you may see results which will cheer you. There's a clip that the Honourable Peter Pike gave me from your local press, I believe they're non-league clubs.

Yours, Margaret Thatcher.



BURNLEY'S mini tour of the Cotswolds ended on a low note last night with a 3-0 defeat at non-league Worcester City. With their fans looking for an encouraging pointer to the new season following Wednesday night's depressing defeat at Gloucester in the first game of the tour, the Clarets crashed to a third minute goal from Andy Preece and second half strikes by Mel Langford and Steve Fergusson after the break. Beazer Homes Premier League outfit Worcester had the Clarets under the cosh after that early breakaway goal by Preece.

Dear Margaret,

I have seen you on T.V.

I have seen you in the paper

I have seen you in magazines

I have heard you on the radio

I adore you, please can I make two requests, which would really make my day.

1—Can we see you at Ewood watching a game?

2—Can I have a photo of you wearing your Rovers strip (you know, the one taken for your identity card?).

Thanks a bundle,

Yours, a true fan.

P.S. Bring Dennis with you and see if we can get the bar opened again on the Riverside.

Dear True Fan,

Obviously you do not follow politics much, as part of the new legislation I won't require an identity card as a guest of the club, but I'll post you a nice picture of me anyway. If you are a true fan of mine you'll realise from all the things you've seen me in that I'm far too busy to watch a live game, by the way Dennis doesn't drink beer.

Yours Margaret.

THE "FTH" INTERVIEW: No. 1 DAVID BRADFORD

David Bradford apologizes for his coffee making (perfectly acceptable instant Nescafe) and for the cluttered state of his back room. He has just arrived back from Manchester with a large stock of greetings cards bought from a wholesale firm run by another ex-Rover, John Waddington. Four years after the end of a playing career which took him from Droylesden to Detroit via Blackburn, Sheffield, Washington and Tampa, he finds himself "Back in the real world" as a sub-postmaster in the town where he is remembered for two things: A classic own-goal and a harping manager's immortal quote predicting he would become the first million-pound footballer.

As a young lad at Little Moss School in Droylesdon, he was an ardent United fan but it was City who first recognized his talent. He vividly remembers the day Harry Godwin, City's Chief Scout administered the big E. "I was in the back of his car as we drove away from the training ground when he turned round to say I was not going to be given an apprenticeship. He thought I was too small. To a fifteen year-old who's only ambition was to be a footballer - well its the worst news you could ever hear!

Spurred on by his father who had played for the reserve team at City before he left the game after a knee injury, young David wrote to every club in the Northwest. Within a week he had a reply from Blackburn Rovers inviting him for a Sunday morning trial.

Under the watchful eye of Eddie Quigley, Bradford impressed enough to be selected for a further two-week trial and subsequently signed apprenticeship forms.

At seventeen, he had played a smattering of Youth and B-team matches when, for the first time in their illustrious history, Rovers dropped into Division Three. Enter Ken Furphy.

"The first-team played a few pre-season friendlies and were struggling and Furphy thought 'sod it! I'll try everything' so after watching me and Gerry McDonald playing in the reserves against Great Harwood on the Tuesday night, he threw us both into the first-team for the opening match of the season the following Saturday. Can you imagine that? I'd never even trained with the first-team".

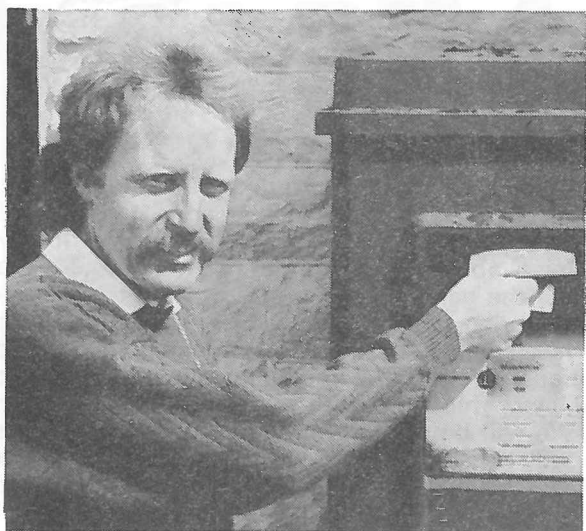


He recalls the match with a gleam in his eye: "I passed the ball to Eamon Rogers who flicked it up and volleyed it into the corner of the net. The Gerry (same age and also making his first-team debut) scored and we had beaten Rotherham 2-1".

What about the famous o.g? Many will remember Bradford turning in a daisy-cutter of a shot from OUTSIDE the penalty area, beating Roger Jones' full-length dive. It was captured for a wider audience by Granada TV cameras. "Best shot I ever had" admits Bradford.

I had to ask him about the Furphy quote: "I think he only said it to increase the price he could get if he ever wanted to sell me". Ironically, after being coaxed away to First Division Sheffield Utd., Furphy himself came back to buy the diminutive midfielder and for the modest fee of £20,000.

At Sheffield, Bradford realized a long held ambition to play in front of a full house at Old Trafford. "Again it was the opening match of the season. Tommy Doc had just brought United up from the Second Division and all my mates were in the Stretford End. We lost 5-1 but I got the Star Player rating in the morning paper".



In his first full season at Bramhall Lane, they finished fifth equal and lost a UEFA tribunal to Everton who were allowed to play in Europe as well as their city neighbours Liverpool. In the Summer he married Elaine, daughter of Jackie "Nudger" Campbell.

Next season, results were poor and after eleven games, Furphy went. They lost 5-0 to West Ham and Furphy had committed the heinous crime of taking off Tony Currie. The fans wouldn't stand for it and neither did the Chairman.

Bradford describes the subsequent Jimmy Sirrell reign as "a nightmare". At the end of the 75/76 season, Sheffield United were relegated along with Wolves and Burnley (Its an ill wind . . .) The team went on tour to Sweden but Bradford was left at home in Sheffield. When he was omitted from the team photo, he knew it was time to go.

Loan spells were spent first at Peterborough, then at West Brom who were back in the First Division under the management of Johnny Giles. Giles then bought him but within a month, resigned over a much publicized contractual dispute. Ronnie Allen could find no place in his team for Bradford and to compound the frustration, Jimmy Sirrell was sacked from Sheffield United within a month of Bradford's leaving. Re-enter Ken Furphy.

Having left Cosmos, he had been given charge of Detroit Express by the owner, Jimmy Hill. Bradford did not need to be asked twice so he and Elaine packed their bags and set off to the New World.

David Bradford has a fond regard for America. The elder of his two boys, Ryan was born out there and his Dad would dearly love him to achieve the moderate level ("about the standard of Barrow") required to get a place in the US national squad and play World Cup football.

From Detroit, he moved to Washington when the whole team, including staff, were transferred. During this time, he roomed with Johan Cruyff but, like many of the clubs in the fledgling N. American Soccer League, Washington over-stretched their budget. Furphy was sacked and Hill sold Bradford to his other club, Coventry - then managed by Dave Sexton. After playing a handful of games he was dropped. The heart was not in it and he longed to return Stateside.

After a phone call to Terry Hennessey, the family left again, this time for Tulsa, and later for Seattle where the manager was Lawrie Calloway - a full back at Rovers during the late sixties. When Seattle folded, the American League was down to only nine clubs from a peak in 1978 of twenty-four. So in 1985 Bradford brought his family back home.

"I did nothing for two years - just sat there sulking". While acknowledging the recent efforts of the PFA, he feels there should be more help for professional footballers when their playing days are over. He now considers he has a "proper job" and looks forward to building a successful business: "Now I know what work is really like".

He keeps fit and plays twice a week with some of his old pals including Stuart Metcalfe and Colin Waldron (from Turf Moor to Turf Accountancy and Bradford's own bookie).

He still follows the fortunes of The Rovers and goes to a few matches. I asked him had he been to the Palace match? "No I was down at Ribchester; the kids were playing in the park while I sat in the car listening to the radio. I was sorry they didn't go up but you have to admire Mackay: he hasn't given up as the signing of Frank Stapleton proves. He has that knack of getting the players to play for each other".

I drained my mug, thanked him and left him to pay out the pensions.

(SH)

ANSWERS TO QUIZ— 1 Chris Sulley; 2 "Who Killed Cock Robin?"; 3 Both transferred to the Rovers from Birmingham City; 4 Both played in goal; 5 Burnley; b. not unless you're a Burnley fan or perhaps a crocodile; 6 David Wagstaffe (playing for BRFC at Orient); 7 Alan Simonsen - played at Ewood for Charlton Athletic who had forgotten a change of strip and so used Rovers'.



Bird's Eye VIEW



Well girls here we go, our very own page in our fanzine. There is no truth in the rumour that they only gave it to us to stop us nagging and moaning, we got it because we deserve it. This will certainly make this fanzine superior to others because we don't know of any other that officially recognises that females have a valid (and valuable) opinion about matters relating to football. We know we are not expected to understand the intricacies of the game and only go to the match to look at the thighs of the blokes with the shorts on, but as the saying goes - behind every successful man is a woman. As this is the first edition the content is all our own but we are looking forward to receiving your comments and tips, etc. for future editions. We will be including an ongoing "Loo Review" of conveniences available on our travels, and start this time with a review of last season on the Blackburn End. Let us know your experiences. We will be offering a range of household hints and cookery tips. For next editions household tips we will be advising on a range of uses for a box of nails. Let us know your suggestions/ideas/tips - all will be passed on (in strictest confidence) to H.G.

THIS MONTH'S COOKERY TIP—

When making chips keep your chest covered and stand well back. (Take note A.K.).

LOO REVIEW

(Starting with Rovers but to include a "Good Loo Guide" of away grounds)

A USERS GUIDE TO THE BLACKBURN END TOILETS (Last season)

- 1—Introduce yourself to male fans taking 'relief' from the game.
- 2—Make choice between broken toilet or broken window.
- 3—Sit, raise right leg (left if preferred), to keep the door shut.
- 4—Keep head down to avoid being recognised.
- 5—Trace pictures while passing time (!)
- 6—Pull chain and run to avoid shower (if lucky).
- 7—Wave at people on Kidder Street through window.
- 8—Collect mushrooms off wall on way out!
- 9—Reaffirm old acquaintances on way back to 'spot'.

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ALPHA CENTURI BLUES

GREETINGS earthlings of Blackburn.

The normal protocol of the Inter-galactic Federation would forbid communication between our kind and an alien species like you. However, it has not escaped our attention that supporters of Blackburn Rovers are quite unlike any other human-kind, and furthermore, the national media pays so little attention to goings on in Blackburn that even a first communication from outerspace is likely to go unnoticed. Aferall, hardly anybody outside Blackburn knows who Colin Hendry is (except his mum) so we have concluded that Blackburn must be some kind of media blackspot.

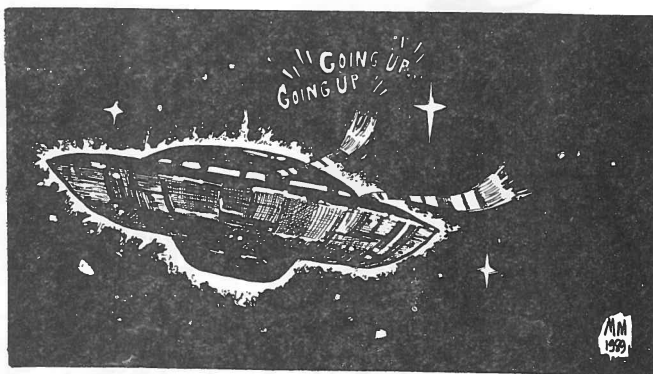
However friends, the seasons goings on have not gone unnoticed here on Wetfart - OK I know its an unfortunate name for a planet, but you should hear what "Burnley" means in our language (actually it means "unbelievably vile diarrhoea following an Indian takeaway").

Many of us Wetfartians are avid Rovers supporters. God knows why, or maybe He doesn't, either way its likely to remain one of the mysteries of the universe, since God is a funny bugger sometimes and not entireley to be trusted. Something obviously went seriously wrong when He made George Courtney for instance. Thus it is that several of us pile down to Ewood on Saturdays in my inter-stellar jetbuggie, which is a bit like a Cortina with nuclear fusion.

You haven't seen us? Well of course you haven't seen us. Four small green creatures with pot bellies and several more limbs than are strictly necessary would look pretty stupid going through the turnstiles at the Blackburn End, though I admit we might get away with it in the Darwen End when Man City come to play. No, we have ways of remaining unnoticed and yet still being present, a bit like Ian Miller really.

Mind you 12 million light years is a bloody long way home when we've lost, even with the needle on Warp Factor 10 the whole way. We dutifully hang our scarves out of the windows, but really I think its lost on most of the other intergalac traffic. There aren't many football fans beyond Alpha Centuri, well maybe the odd Leeds supporter in the personal assassination squad of the murderous Zitface emperor, but wherever there's a bunch of sadistic bastards with the IQ of an amoeba, there's bound to be a Leeds fan amongst them somewhere.

At least we've got Clubcall on Wetfart. What a bonus! Up to the minute news and the collected thoughts of Tony Parks each week - brain the size of a planet that lad, OK, more the size of a peanut. Well, playing in the same side as Ken Beamish is bound to do something serious to your grip on reality. My personal favourite was the bit about Shrewsbury being "the typical Second Division mid-table side" - so typical, they got relegated.



Well, that just about wraps up this first missive from Wetfart. Next time you look up at the night sky, give us a thought. Find Orion, look for his belt, and just below it lies Wetfart - about where his bollocks would be.

I'd best be off, I can feel a dose of the Burnley's coming on; must have been that chicken madras.

Your extraterrestrial fellow-supporter,

Sputnik Timebender.

"FOUR THOUSAND HOLES" is brought to you by:

(Contributors:) SEAMUS HEFFERNAN, BRENDAN SEARSON, DAVID METCALFE, STEVE HANCOCK, DEREK SAY; SHEILA, LYNN & SHARON ("Bird's Eye View").

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(Photo's:) ANDREW HOWARD.

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This project will stand or fall on the material offered by you, the supporter at large, so now you get the drift, try putting pen to paper (or better still, fingers to typewriter keys) and send us something. All correspondence will be considered for the Letters Page unless otherwise stated.

If you would like to read other clubs fanzines (some of which are mentioned within these pages) a comprehensive list together with the addresses from which to order them, appears each month in the Father Fanzine of them all, "When Saturday Comes" which is available from 1-11, Ironmonger Row, London EC1V 3QM. Price 80p (incl. p & p) or £7.50 for one years subscription.

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